

I have been an Amateur operator since 1976, progressing from Novice through Amateur Extra. I believe the ARRL proposal, RM-10867, offers too many enhancements to our current amateur licensing structure. While I certainly understand the need to attract new amateur operators to our hobby, it is just that...a hobby...and a hobby that is worthwhile, beneficial to communities in times of emergencies and has provided incentive for youngsters to pursue technical vocations and studies...including myself! Due to this, I believe we should not wantonly lower "the bar" greatly just to ensure a large influx of new participants.

I understand the need to attract more folks, but I believe this could be done with only slight modifications of our existing license structure, certainly not the creation of a new, easy license with HF privileges. I believe we would be better served to allow existing Technician and Technician Plus licensees to gain HF privileges proposed by the RM-10867, in addition to their existing privileges would be best. To grandfather them to General greatly cheapens all current General licensees and grants them privileges they have not likely been tested on. The United States Marine Corps has a current ad campaign which shows a USMC Sword on the side of a tractor trailer truck with the inscription, "Earned, Never Given" and I think this is a similar concept for amateurs. Some always appreciates something they work for an earn over something easily achieved...and so it should be in Amateur licensing. My mother was 73 yrs old when she passed her Tech Plus with now prior experience...she was a housewife. If she can take and pass this exam in a week or so of casual study, so can most others. Moving Advance licensees to Extra is fine with me.